CHAPTER XVIII.

FREEMASONRY IN YORK.

I HAVE already cited the "Parchment Roll"[1] as evidence of the character of the old Lodge at York from March 19, 1712, down to December 27, 1725, during which period the records testify that the meetings were simply entitled those of a Lodge, Society, Fraternity, or Company of "Antient and Honourable Assemblies of Free and Accepted Masons."

Other evidences of the existence of the Lodge at York have been given, dating back to the seventeenth century, notably the York MS. of A.D. 1693, which contains "the names of the Lodge;" six in all, including the warden.[2] A still earlier relic is a mahogany flat rule or gauge, with the following names and year incised:—

William ✡ Baron
1663
of Yorke
Iohn Crake Iohn ✡ Baron.

Mirror: Baron William

John < > Baron

Mr. Todd[3] is inclined to think that the John Drake mentioned was collated to the Prebendal Stall of Donington in the cathedral church of York in October 1663, and if so, Francis Drake, the historian, was a descendant, which, to say the least, is very probable.

Considerable activity was manifested by the York brotherhood from 1723—the year when the premier Grand Lodge of England published its first "Book of Constitutions"—and particularly during 1725.

The following will complete the roll of meetings (1712-1730), of which the first portation has been already furnished.

"'This day Dec. 27, 1725, Being the Festival of St. John the Evangelist, the Society went in Procession to Merchant's Hall, where after the Grand Feast was over, they unanimously chose the Worsp'. Charles Bathurst, Esqre., their Grand Master, Mr. Johnson his Deputy, Mr. Pawson and Mr. Drake, Wardens, Mr. Scourfield, Treasurer, and John Russell, Clerk for the ensuing year."

[1] Pp. 23-26.
[2] Chap. II., p. 69; and see *facsimile* in Hughan's "Old Charges."
[3] Freemason, Nov. 15, 1884.
[4] Continued from page 26, and now for the first time published *in extenso*.